



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 20, 2013

MEDIA CONTACTS
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253
Krista Thompson | 928.637.5603
Jolene Holgate | 928.871.7160
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

Health, Education, and Human Services Committee discusses miscommunication between Navajo schools and the BIE

WINDOW ROCK – Last Thursday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received a report from the Dine Bi Olta School Board Association relating to the ongoing reorganization of the Bureau of Indian Education.

In light of the recent school board elections held in January, HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michael's) requested an update from the designated school board officials regarding their perspectives about reorganization.

"We have school boards that are sometimes confused about their authority as a governing body for community schools and how the reorganization will affect them," said Delegate Hale.

According to DBOSBA administrative director Angie Barney-Nez, there is a high level of miscommunication between the school boards and the goals of the BIE.

"We hear one message from the regional office in Albuquerque and another from Washington, D.C.," said Barney-Nez. "We find there is a lot of disconnect with the BIE restructuring itself and we haven't received any clarification about restructuring here in the Navajo Area."

Delegate Hale said he believes the BIE and DODE also need to work together to further clarify how Title 10 of the Navajo Nation Code is to be implemented in the Nation's BIE schools.

"DBOSBA is being told that the schools do not need to follow Title 10. The federal government says it is not a federal requirement and it is not a requirement to spend our allocations," said Nez.

Following the report, Delegate Hale said he was displeased to hear that BIE officials were not working with the school board or schools to interpret the school's functions and authorities.

"The committee needs to fix this immediately. We cannot have the Nation's schools derailing from Navajo laws," said Delegate Hale.

The HEHSC voted to accept with a vote of 3-0.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org